TAKE heed in time:

OR,

A briefe Relation of many Harmes which have of late been done by fire in MARLBOROUGH and in other places.

This copy was drawne up and Printed, on purpose for the World to take notice of, and to be carefull to prevent the danger of Fire.

Written by L. P.

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A briefe Deſcription of the Towne of MARLBOROUGH,

And of the Harmes that were there done upon Thurſday the 28th of *Aprill*, this preſent year, 1653.

THe famous and flouriſhing Town of Marlborough in Wiltſhire had of late two faire Pariſh Churches, one called by the name of St. Peters, and the other Church called by the name

of St. Maries : There was likewise many faire Streets and stately Buildings, especially one gallant Street, called the High street, in which they kept their Markets, which Markets consisted of all kind of necessarie provisions which was brought in far and near by the Country people. And indeed it was a gallant place both for Corn, Butter, Cheese, and other such like provisions as any was in all the Country: The street wherein the market was kept, is supposed to be in length and breadth full as large as Cheape-side, and on both sides had many goodly shops well filled with rich and costly Commodities, Silks and Taffety, Cloath, and Lace, Linnen and Woolen, Gold and Silver, no braver Wares can be had or bought in London, then was to be had in the famous Towne of Marlborough: At the upper end of the market-place

was

was a gallant Building called the Town-hall, wherein the Magistrates sat and held the Sessions of the Peace at appointed times: There were many faire Inns Taverns, and Victualing houses to entertain Carriers, and Travellers, and such which had occasion to make use of them, for it stood upon the Roade betwixt Loudon and Bristoll: and to be briefe it was a Towne of very good Orders and Government.

And thus having told youthe situation and substance of the Town, I shall, with Gods leave, though with a grieved heart, declare unto you the manner of the ruine and destruction of the same.

Here followeth a brief and true Relation, as near as it can be gathered, of the harmes that were done by fire in the Town of Marlborough in Wiltshire, Aprill 28. 1653.

On Thursday the 28 of Aprill in the house of one Mr. Freeman a Tanner, as some of his Servants were imployed with drying of Bark, the Barke took fire so suddenly, that it quickly did much harme, the house standing on the South side of the street, towards the West end of the Towne neare unto St Peters Church, the fire prevailed so much that it tooke hold of the dwelling house, and so running a crosse the street from one side to the other, it came to be of such force, and vehemency that the like was never seene

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in England before, by the report of some of them that were eye witnesses of that sad object.

It burned on both sides of the street, all the Inns, Taverns, Gentlemens houses, Shop keepers houses, Grosers, Mercers, Habberdashers, all manner of Tradesmen that were inhabitants in that street, lost both Houses and Goods by means of that consuming fire. Yet that was not all, it burned downe the market house, and run into St. Maries Parish, and burned the Church and many dwelling houses in that Parish, so that in St. Peters Parish, and St. Maries Parish, it is verified, that at least three hundred Families were dispossed of their habitations, all which was done in the space of three or foure houres.

For when the fire had fastened on one of the houses where were Piles

of Wood and Fagots in their backsides, it flamed and burned so strongly that all that ever could be done could not quench the fire, until it had deboured, and burnt to ashes, all these places which I have here named.

Yet that is not all, for it was not the houses that were burned alone, but also the Goods that were in them, there was Brasse and Pewter, Gold, and Silver melted, the value whereof cannot bee made knowne, there was Silkes and Taffety Woollen and Linner cloth and many other rich commodities consumed to ashes.

There was foure or five tun of Cheese which was laid in store in the Market house consumed to nothing.

And to be briefe, every man that dwelt in the Town is sensible of the misery that happened, but no man

can

can tell the valine of what was lost.

And thus was the stately flourishing Town of Marlborough consumed with fire on a sudden.

It would make a heart drop tears of blood that had but heard the dolefull cryes and heavy moanes that past between men and their Wives, Parents and Children. The Wife crying out to the Husband, O dear Husband what will become of us and our Children; The Husband answering the Wife we are all undone, I know not what to doe,

The Children crying for bread, the Parents had none to give them, nor so much as a house to put their heads in, nor a bed to lay their wearied limbs upon.

And thus were the poore made poorer, and some of the richest became as poor as the poorest.

And

And now are they all in a sad condition, the Lord in his mercy send them comfort. Little did they that had plenty in the morning thinke that they should be made destitute & desolate before night. Wherefore I desire that all good Christians would both looke upon their afflictions and lay it to heart, and with all possible and speedy meanes that may be done, helpe to releive their wants.

Gods word and a good conscience sayes, that hee that hath two Coats ought to give one to him that hath none. If it be so, I trust that the good people, and well disposed Christians, that have plenty, will with the eyes of compassion, and bountifull hearts reflect upon our distressed friends of Marlborough. It is an old saying that one cannot help a great many, but a great many may help one: So I would

have

haue it to be, that all the Cities and Shires in England, may forthwith lend their assistance to relieue the distressed people of Marlborough, and to doe by them as they themselues would be done by if the case were their own.

One thing concerning Marlborough we haue great cause to giue the Lord praise for, and that is this, although there were so many houses burnt, and so much goods and treasure consumed with scorching fire, yet there were not many people destroyed, onely those which shall here after be spoken of.

There were foure Dutch men which laboured and took paines and did their best endeauours to quench the fire, of which two of them were killed outright, and the other two are since dead of their wounds. Of others there were none but a Post boy that lost his life, and a Taylors

wife

wife burned to death in her owne house, and as for Francis Freeman the Tanner, at whose house at first the fire began, it is said that he profest himselfe to be Christ. I pray God that hee may take heed in time.

Thus having told you the manner of the consumming destruction of a late famous ancient Towne: I purpose also in a brief discourse of another strange mis hap done by fire in St Katherines Lane near unto the Tower of London, hoping that others will take better heed in time to come.

On Friday being 9 April a woman that was the mother of a child being vext with some of her neighbours set her child by the fire in a careleſſe manner, and went forth of the Room in anger, but before shee returned againe the child was mortally wounded with the fire, for it

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burned off one of the Armes, and one of the Legs, and so mortified the body of it, that the child lived in burning misery about the space of two houres, and so gave up the Ghost. This came to passe through carelesnesse, and because the mother did not take heed in time.

And this was Printed for others to take example by.

Many more such examples might here be spoken of, if occasion should serve. and this I am verily perswaded, that if people would be more carefull, there would not be halfe so much harme done by fire as is, therefore I desire all people whether they be Masters, or Servants; Parents or Children, to have speciall care how you afterwards repent when it is too late. Fire and Water are said to be good servants but ill masters, and so certainly they be, for where fire can get the master-

ship

ship all goes to ruine, fire is such a devouring monster that it takes pitey of no person as you have been told in the former discourse.

Here

Here followeth a brief Relation of a ſad and lamentable accident which happened by fire this preſent year, 1653.

AT a gallant market Towne called Layton in Shropſhire, there dwelt and lived many wealthy Gentlemen and rich tradeſmen, to which place often times many of the Countrey people which were men of rank and quality would come for recreation to eate drink and bee merry with their friends. But ſee what happened upon a time, when the people, towns men and others were in the midſt of all their iollity, ſuddenly a fearfull fire aroſe which began at a nominated place of the Town, and conſumed in little time above a hundred and fifty

houſes

houſes burned to aſhes, and melted Gold, Silver Plate and other goods to the worth of two and forty thouſand pound, thus was merriment changed into ſorrow, and their ioy into mourning, good reaſon therefore have all men to take warning by their harmes, and ſeeke to prevent danger before it comes upon us.

FINIS.